

Day Support Waiver General Information

States make applications for Medicaid Waivers with the federal Medicaid agency, known as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). This enables states to waive the usual requirements that individuals must reside in an institution in order to receive Medicaid funding for services. In this way, Medicaid funds certain community-based alternatives to institutional care. Virginia has funded services under the Day Support Waiver since July 2005.

In Virginia the DS Waiver is administered by the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS). Day-to-day DS Waiver operations are managed by the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS). Locally, DS Waiver services for individuals are coordinated by case managers employed by Community Services Boards (CSBs) or Behavioral Health Authorities (BHAs). The actual services are delivered by CSBs/BHAs and private providers across the state.

In order to receive DS Waiver services, an individual must meet eligibility requirements and a "slot" (an opening of Waiver services available to a single individual) must be available. Currently the number of slots is limited by the availability of funding for DS Waiver services. Funds are managed at the state level and the appropriation of additional funds to grow the Waiver is dependent upon General Assembly action.

Individual Eligibility

An individual is deemed eligible for DS Waiver services based on the same three factors as for the MR Waiver (see "MR Waiver General Information):

- Diagnostic Eligibility
- Functional Eligibility
- Financial Eligibility

Medicaid regulations specify that, once an individual has been determined eligible by the CSB/BHA case manager, he or she must be offered a choice between institutional and Waiver services.

Waiting List Information

There are 3 classifications of waiting lists, just as there are for the MR Waiver (see "MR Waiver General Information.")

DS Waiver Services Available in Virginia

The following services are available to individuals meeting the specific service criteria who have been assigned a DS Waiver slot:

- **Day support:** training, assistance and specialized supervision to enable the individual to acquire, retain or improve his/her self-help, social and adaptive skills. These services typically take place away from the home in which the individual resides and may be located in a “center” or in community locations.
- **Prevocational services:** training and assistance to prepare an individual for paid or unpaid employment. These services are not job task-oriented. These are for individuals who need to learn skills fundamental to employment such as accepting supervision, getting along with co-workers, using a time clock, etc.

Both of the above services may be provided by agencies licensed by DMHMRSAS to provide Day Support. In addition, Prevocational services may be provided by agencies that have vendor agreements with the Department of Rehabilitative Services to provide extended employment services, long-term employment support services, or supported employment services.

Accessing DS Waiver Services

The process for accessing the DS Waiver is the same as for the MR Waiver (see “MR Waiver General Information”), except for the following:

- When an individual's name is selected for the next available DS Waiver slot, OMRS sends a form to the CSB/BHA to be relayed to the individual, offering him or her the slot and requesting a response in 5 days. Those individuals/families needing time to consider may have up to 30 days to make a decision whether to accept or decline the DS Waiver slot.
- Once the individual accepts the slot and is enrolled, the individual selects providers for needed services.
- Individuals may receive DS Waiver services and remain on the waiting list for the MR Waiver. They may also decline DS Waiver services and remain on the waiting list for MR Waiver.